



LAC DMH
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF
MENTAL HEALTH

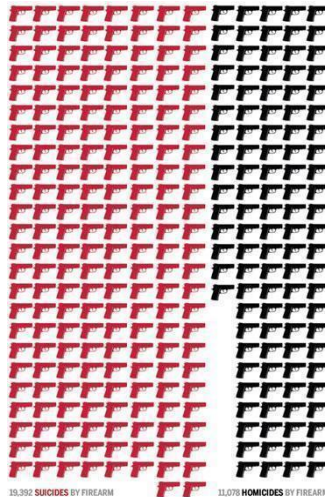
Los ANGELES COUNTY SUICIDE PREVENTION NETWORK

SPN News Bulletin - March 2013, Volume 2, Issue 1

Mean Matters *by Martha Alamillo*

In 2010, 38,364 Americans took their lives, 19,392 of them with firearms (CDC, 2010). It's no wonder that many communities are searching for ways to reduce suicide and minimize access to lethal means. On January 17th, 2013 Well Aware, a website dedicated in reducing youth suicide launched a webinar called Suicide Safety.

The webinar was led by Cathy Barber, MPA a national suicide expert and advocate for her Means Matter campaign. The webinar educated participants across the nation in how to reduce a suicidal person's access to firearms while in crisis. During the webinar, Cathy offered overwhelming evidence that access to firearms is associated with increased suicide risk and that reducing someone's access to lethal means is a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention. In 2007, a study found that suicide victims' went from thinking about suicide to actually attempting from a few minutes to several hours (Hawton, 2007). Another study found that 1 in 4 deliberated suicides in less than 5 minutes and 9 out of 10 attempted in less than a day (Simon, 2005).



Each gun represents 100 deaths by firearm in 2010.

The astounding percentages are below:

24% said less than 5 minutes
24% said 5-19 minutes
23% said 20 minutes to 1 hour
16% said 2-8 hours
13% said 1 or more days

As advocates, researchers and professionals continue to find ways to keep loved ones and clients safe, it's important that lethal means training be included as part of strategic suicide prevention approach. We know that firearms are lethal, irreversible, accessible and the leading method of suicide. This isn't a gun ownership issue but a safety issue when a person is in acute crisis.

Other topics and discussions raised included learning how to ask about guns in the home, partnering up with gun ownership communities and training in lethal means restriction.

If you want to learn more about the Means Matter campaign, please visit <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/>

Youth Mental Health First Aid *by Aileen Montoya and William Barreto*



Mental Health First Aid USA has introduced a new curriculum focused on helping youth (ages 12-18) who may be experiencing a mental health challenge or crisis.

Youth Mental Health First Aid is a public education program which introduces participants to the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents, builds understanding of the importance of early intervention, and most importantly – teaches individuals how to help a youth in crisis or experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge.

The course teaches participants the risk factors and warning signs of a variety of mental health challenges common among adolescents, including anxiety, depression, psychosis, eating disorders, AD/HD, disruptive behavior disorders, and substance use disorder. Participants do not learn to diagnose, nor how to provide any therapy or counseling – rather, participants learn a core five-step action plan (ALGEE) to support an adolescent developing signs and symptoms of mental illness or in an emotional crisis:

Assess for risk of suicide or harm
Listen non-judgmentally
Give reassurance and information
Encourage appropriate professional help
Encourage self-help and other support strategies

The course is designed for adults whom regularly interact with adolescents, but may also be appropriate for older adolescents (16 and older) so as to encourage youth peer to peer interaction. Anyone who regularly works or interacts with youth – teachers, athletic coaches, mentors, juvenile justice professionals – may find the course content useful.

Courses have been scheduled to take place at Florida in February, Texas in March, Nevada in April, Illinois in May, and Pennsylvania in July.

For more information visit any questions on other ways you can get involved in the program Margaret Jaco at info@mentalhealthfirstaid.org.

Suicide Injuries in Los Angeles County – 2010 Data¹

In 2009, suicides outnumbered homicides in Los Angeles County for the first time in decades and unfortunately this trend has continued in 2010.

- During 2010 there were:
 - 793 suicide deaths
 - 4,641 non-fatal suicide attempt hospitalizations
 - 5,482 treated-and-released suicide attempt emergency department (ED) visits
- Most suicides were caused by suffocation/hanging (37%), followed closely by firearm (35%). This is the first year (in the data available, 1989–2010) in which firearm was not the leading cause of suicide death in LAC.
- The vast majority of suicide attempts requiring hospitalization and ED visits were caused by poisoning, 71%.
- Suicide deaths were more common among males, but hospitalizations and ED visits for suicide attempts were more common among females.
- Suicide death rates were highest among middle aged, White, males, while hospitalization and ED rates were highest among females and adolescents and young adults.
- The age groups most at risk varied by severity:
 - Suicide death rates were highest among 55-64, 45-54 and 65+ year olds
 - Suicide attempt hospitalization rates peaked among 15-19, 20-24 and 25-29 year olds
 - Suicide attempts ED visits peaked among 15-19, 20-24 and 25-29 year olds

The Suicidal Patient in Primary Care Webinar

On February 20, SPRC Senior Advisor Peggy West and Julie Goldstein Grumet, SPRC's Director of Prevention and Practice, will discuss WICHE/SPRC's [Suicide Prevention Toolkit for Rural Primary Care](#) during a HRSA webinar on The Suicidal Patient in Primary Care: Prevention Resources for Providers. The toolkit contains the information and tools needed to implement state-of-the art suicide prevention practices in primary care settings. The webinar will take place on February 20 at 2 pm ET.



The following is an approximate timeline to submit information or articles for the upcoming issue.

June 2013:	May 24
September 2013:	August 30
December 2013:	November 29

What would you like to see in future issues of SPN News? Help us tailor SPN News to fit your needs. E-mail your suggestions or requests to dmsoto@dmh.lacounty.gov and we'll see what we can do!

The SPN News is sent to all members of the Suicide Prevention Network. It is also posted in PDF on a Partner in Suicide Prevention webpage.

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) CALENDAR

Dates	Location
March 12 and 13	Kedren Hospital 4211 Avalon Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90011
March 26 and 27	Kedren Hospital 4211 Avalon Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90011
April 25 and 26	Professional Development Center 12820 Pioneer Boulevard, Norwalk, CA
May 1 and 2	Dockweiler Beach Youth Center 12505 Vista Del Mar, Los Angeles, CA 90245
May 22 and 23	Mental Health America 506 W. Jackman Street, Lancaster, CA 93534
Registration information: http://lacdmh.lacounty.gov/training&workforce.html For any questions: suicideprevention@dmh.lacounty.gov	

¹ Mortality data from the Death Statistical Master File, California Dept of Health Services, Office of Vital Statistics.
Hospitalization and ED data from Hospital Discharge and Emergency Department Data, Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development.